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UNCLAS MANAMA 000292

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TUNIS PLEASE PASS RELO

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SUBJECT: MICRO-SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDY

REF: A) STATE 040341; B) STATE 40950

1. Post welcomes the micro-scholarships for English language study initiative outlined in reftel A. This program will assist post in raising the English language abilities of an important target audience.

2. Post's outline of plans to start up this program in Bahrain follow:

-- Program administration/funding: PAS Manama will issue a grant totaling \$18,000 to the American Cultural and Educational Center (ACEC) to run this program. ACEC is a local, privately-owned and operated English language center loosely affiliated with the Embassy. The Gulf RELO attends ACEC Board meetings and we have had an English Language Fellow placed at ACEC for each of the past three years. One important caveat: ACEC does not have a Dun and Bradstreet number, which is now a requirement for all Department-funded grants. We will advise ACEC to apply for the Dun and Bradstreet number and, upon its issuance, make preparations to issue the grant. The Dun and Bradstreet website advises that it takes up to thirty business days for an organization to receive their DUNS Number. This will delay the start up date for this program in Bahrain.

-- Academic content: Post's exceptional junior English Language Fellow has been offered a position to remain at ACEC as Academic Director when her ECA-funded Fellowship ends in June 2004. Post will request that she be primarily responsible for the micro-scholarships program, including the academic content, enrichment activities, and other requirements during its start-up and implementation phase. Post appreciates the ability to provide ACEC with some of the in-country staff costs (\$120 per student as stipulated in reftel A), as it provides us with the necessary leverage to ensure that the program will be well-run.

-- Selection: Post will work with ACEC to select students from up to four secondary schools (two boys' schools and two girls' schools) that have a concentration of non-elite, socio-economically disadvantaged students. We need to request permission from the Ministry of Education to offer the scholarships and then develop a selection process in cooperation with the Ministry - or the selected schools, per guidance from MinEd. The RELO and/or the APAAO will represent the Ambassador on the selection committee for these scholarships.

-- Micro-scholarship "calculations": The cost of a six week course at ACEC totals \$305, which includes all coursebooks and student materials. This reflects the high cost of living in the Gulf and Bahrain (e.g., high teacher salaries, facilities rent and maintenance, and utilities/air conditioning). As a result, the \$18,000 allotment transferred to post in reftel B will provide approximately 13-14 scholarships for approximately eight to nine months of study.

-- Materials: Post looks forward to receiving ECA's English-in-a-box teaching materials to pass to ACEC to assist with the curriculum development of this program. Please advise ASAP when these and other appropriate materials will be available. ACEC continually requests materials from post and we regularly provide Department produced materials. ACEC would welcome enhancement materials such as graded readers, posters, paperback novels, U.S. maps, biographies of American leaders, and U.S. and state flags.

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